

Commissioner Macdonald's Report

CONTINUED

firmly convinced that no remedy has been suggested that will equal the use of coal tar for preserving a macadam road that has already been built and prevent the dust evil in so far as that is possible.

A great convention was held in Paris last summer to take up this new question of how to lay the dust and preserve the roads, and it was attended by delegates from all over the civilized world. The necessity for this convention was the fact which had forced itself into recognition that unless something was done the entire road systems of the civilized world would break up and make of non-effect all that money and science had done in the way of improvements for centuries.

From an authentic source—no less a person than Mr. Bartholomew, minister of public works of France—the announcement was made that the national highways in the Seine department were in such a state of disrepair that it would cost \$4,000,000 to bring them into their former condition of usefulness and have them competent to sustain and take care of the travel they are called upon to bear. In England last year an expenditure of \$52,000,000 was necessary to take care of the 150,000 miles of road—both for new construction and also for repairs. From every part of the United States the unanimous verdict of commissioners in charge of highway construction is that something will have to be done, and that speedily, to take care of the entire road systems. So that it is not a new condition peculiar to our state. Our state has been very fortunate in this respect. We have not reached the point of howling calamity as yet. After careful investigation over all of our macadam roads that have been constructed since 1895 there is no cause for immediate alarm. It is simply a question of providing for the future most economical methods for the future care and maintenance of our roads and not so much from the fear of complete and utter annihilation of our road system today that the remedy to be used upon our state highway systems should be put into operation.

Automobiles.—During the last three years the use of the automobile on our highways has become very general. This is due to the fact that the sum total of automobiles manufactured and sold in our country during the years 1906, 1907 and 1908 very nearly equals the entire number of automobiles now in use. The industry has grown by leaps and bounds, and by a rather singular coincidence the roads have been the admiration of the world—the highest road building authorities have stated that the principal highways have gone into such a state of disrepair that the expense of putting them back will run up into millions of dollars. In England, seven counties near London report that the percentage of increase in cost of care and maintenance claimed to be due to the use of the automobile has been from 22 to 77 per cent. In Massachusetts, the highway commission claims that about 53 per cent of the destruction to state highways is due to the automobile, and that it will require \$300,000 to make repairs next year. Last year New Jersey expended \$700,000 in repairs.

What is claimed by such eminent authorities, and from our own experience we are in duty bound to acknowledge. But automobiles are here to stay. They are licensed to go upon our highways. The attraction is sufficiently great to reasonably conclude that they are an important part, to say the least, of the traffic that will have to be taken care of upon the main highways of the state. Those who own and operate cars are sufficiently numerous and influential to command respect, and the proposition therefore simplifies itself into the very reasonable conclusion that we must build our roads and maintain them to take care of this new traffic.

The rubber tire has proven itself as being the best shoeing for the wheel. The method of propulsion, with the principle involved, also suggests that the shearing process on our roads will go on. The traction from the tire and the friction between the wheels and under the body will continue just as long as automobiles are used on our roads. The delightful sensation of a rapidly moving car has such an irrepressible exhilarating attraction that the speed of the car, to the limit of its motive power, will be indulged in by all those who own and operate cars. There has been very little question about the width of the tires or the weight of the car, or its many appointments. The whole interest seems to be centered in the quest of attaining and maintaining a high rate of speed. The last right or privilege that gentlemen who own and operate cars would desire to have taken from them is that of running a car with perfect freedom, and the last right or privilege which would be piled with so reluctantly is the entire cause of the new destruction and disintegration imminent upon our highway system. So that the only remedy, in the last analysis, of this whole question is that if we are to maintain all of the rights and privileges to those who operate cars we must provide some way to construct our roads and maintain them. It is a race to have a first class system of highways. The expense of so doing will be large. The money for keeping up our roads must be had from some source.

The charges today for the use of automobiles on our highways do not begin to adequately take care of this question of care and maintenance. Not a car operating upon our highways today is assessed any more than as much as all vehicles formerly paid under the old toll gate system, while the roads were very nearly, if not at all times, almost impassable.

The money received for repairs from automobile registrations for 1907 was \$20,000. The money received from automobiles and operators and bonds and fines during 1908 amounted to \$27,448.75.

As an example of how much money is required to keep the roads in repair it is only necessary to state the fact that on the macadam system in the state which represents about one-half the total mileage of roads in improved under state and since 1895—it would cost \$150,000 to furnish and apply water during the next season. One inch of stone delivered at the railroad stations for these highways would cost another \$150,000. Paving down the shoulders, cleaning out the gutters, carting and spreading stone would cost approximately \$40,000 more. Many of our roads have been in use for twelve years, and have so worn down that a resurfacing will be necessary before many years. This will involve, in their repair, a large amount of money. So that the proposition is one to be seriously considered from a money point of view. Additional funds for the repairs must come from some source, either from the state or an increase in the license fees.

It has been claimed that there is no justice in the assessment levied by the state for the use of the roads by those owning and operating automobiles, and that it is class legislation. If it is class legislation, there is a justice in making it so. No other vehicles using our roads have been accorded the same rights and privileges as have been extended to the owners and operators of automobiles.

The number of automobiles licensed in our state is approximately 6,500, while it is safe to say that during the

past season 40,000 cars have come into and gone through the state from other states. The question has been raised that we should have reciprocity extended by other states so that owners of cars in this state may enjoy the same rights and privileges accorded to non-residents in Connecticut. But, even with this privilege, with the small number of cars owned in Connecticut, it takes hardly be in the line of reciprocity.

One of the most salutary remedies that can be adopted to stop reckless driving is that which has been so very well stated in the state, in having the several automobile clubs take the matter in their hands as a personal obligation. It has been quite noticeable that since the organized clubs of the state have interested themselves along this line, excessive speeding has not been indulged in to the extent it was formerly.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Since the commencement of state aid in 1895 conditions have changed materially. Each law under which we have operated has developed many features that did not present themselves under former laws.

The increase in the appropriation and the widespread interest in and necessity for improvement in our highway system has shown, clearly, that if we are to keep pace with the demands of the times, we must develop, in accordance to the new conditions which have arisen, make certain changes in the present law that will be competent to accomplish that which is necessary to carry out the policy of the state in providing the roads of the state as rapidly as possible.

The appropriation provided for under the present law for administration has been found to be totally inadequate to take care of the appropriations. Hence, an increased appropriation for administration is requested so that assistance may be extended to the commissioner that will not be so remote as at the present time. It is the purpose of the department, if sufficient funds are provided, to have county or district deputies, to whom can be delegated a large part of the work that is now an obligation resting on the commissioner. The law under which we operate today gives the commissioner authority to appoint deputies, but the funds have not been sufficient to carry out this system, and I would respectfully request that a sufficient appropriation be made to carry out this recommendation.

Another important necessity is in providing for carrying out the established policy of the state in improving trunk lines. Many of these trunk lines run around, or go through the outer boundaries of small towns of the state, and there is hardly an important trunk line that does not touch some town that is financially unable to construct the road, to say nothing of taking care of it after it is constructed. Towns have made very serious objections to the exercising of the right of eminent domain, under the present law, to construct an expensive section of highway through their limits. They claim they are financially unable to bear this added expense and that the road is not a part of the highways used by the town to carry its business to its nearest and best market place, and that the expense of construction and care and maintenance, with the travel these great trunk lines are called upon to sustain, is a burden they do not want to assume. Their claims cannot be contradicted by the highway department, and I would recommend that the appropriations that have been made specifically for the extension of our trunk lines be not made a charge against the towns except in so far as the law provides for one-quarter of the expense of repairs. The justice of this recommendation has become very apparent in the investigation made during the past year and the increased travel that these trunk lines are called upon to sustain.

These great trunk lines have ceased to be local in character, by reason of their general use by the traveling public now using our trunk lines almost exclusively.

I would also recommend that the restrictions limiting the amount of money to be used by the several towns in the state be left an open question so far as the amount of money that will be available under the present law is concerned. The limitation under the present law is \$700,000 a year. Five hundred thousand dollars of this amount is appropriated directly to the towns, as requested by their vote, and \$200,000 is appropriated for trunk lines. During the past six years over two millions of dollars have been requested by the towns in excess of the amount of appropriations available. Under the present law, at the time of the last allotment, \$1,827,000 was requested in excess of the total amount appropriated for the two years. Any other advantage in having this restriction removed is that it would give six weeks of valuable road building time is taken up by the towns in holding town meetings and getting in their votes for the appropriation every two years at which time allotments are made.

Under the present recommendation, the entire appropriation, made under the bonding act could be arranged for by simply calling the town meetings, and letting the entire amount available from the bonds, in any reasonable time that could be used for highway construction. The constantly changing board of selectmen involves a large amount of correspondence which could be avoided if the entire appropriation were taken care of, as recommended. No additional obligation would be entailed on the state, by reason of the fact that this money would come from the sale of the bonds and not from the income of the state. Larger contracts could be gotten ready and let. The provision now ingrained into the law in not allowing any town to exceed \$250,000 in two years could remain as a check, so that an equal and fair distribution of this money could still be had. Already \$1,500,000—less \$132—has been appropriated. This will take care of the work that has been planned for the coming year and would carry the work along until the first of October, after which, town meetings could be held and allotments made to the several towns. Larger sections of highway could be improved, or a division of the money over several sections could be made. Complaint has been made and dissatisfaction expressed from a majority of the one hundred and thirty-two towns to the effect that while they had requested \$250,000 under the former allotment, their applications had been sealed down to \$7,572. Many of these towns had elected by their vote, to improve several sections of highway, but were denied the privilege because of the fact that the allotment made to them had been reduced from their original vote. The time originally planned to have this appropriation extended over would not be impinged on in any respect by the adoption of this recommendation, nor would any added obligation be placed on the state by its adoption. The present law provides that from the passage of the law the \$4,000,000 shall extend over a period of six years, and if the state is disposed to expedite matters and give an impetus to the movement, the adoption of this recommendation will materially assist towards that end. This recommendation is respectfully urged.

I also recommend that the appropriation of \$250,000 a year for repairs be increased to \$500,000 a year. It is impossible to organize or operate an intelligent system of repairs without adequate funds with which to carry on the work. No extended elaboration

of the necessity for this recommendation is required.

The greatest difficulty on our trunk line systems is the fact that the special appropriation for this purpose is not adequate to take care of the total mileage of trunk lines. The completion of eighty-two miles, surveys for which we have in the office, will require over half a million dollars, and we have at our disposal for next season's business about one-half of that amount. The completion of the first section of our trunk line system, as originally mapped out, will require about \$4,500,000. The entire appropriation under the bonding act available for this purpose after Oct. 1, 1909, is practically \$1,000,000, which under the present law cannot be used in excess of \$500,000 a year. So the department is confronted with a very unpleasant situation, to say the least. Insofar as it is possible, a division of the trunk line money will have to be made along equitable lines.

A few changes have been made in the direction of the fourteen trunk lines which have added somewhat to the first system of improved trunk lines contemplated.

The following tables will relate the number of miles on the fourteen trunk lines that have been improved state-wise and (excluding) the unfinished mileage and the total number of miles of surveys now in the office:

Trunk Line No. 1.
Completed length ... 45.1 miles
Unfinished length ... 34.0 miles
Total ... 79.1 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 15.32 miles

Trunk Line No. 2.
Completed length ... 4.6 miles
Unfinished length ... 51.5 miles
Total ... 56.1 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 13.0 miles

Trunk Line No. 3.
Completed length ... 38.8 miles
Unfinished length ... 43.4 miles
Total ... 82.2 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 8.8 miles

Branch of Trunk Line No. 3.
Completed length ... 5.3 miles
Unfinished length ... 48.95 miles
Total ... 54.25 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 5.65 miles

Trunk Line No. 4.
Completed length ... 42.4 miles
Unfinished length ... 25.35 miles
Total ... 67.75 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 2.3 miles

Trunk Line No. 5.
Completed length ... 22.2 miles
Unfinished length ... 19.75 miles
Total ... 41.95 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 3.4 miles

Trunk Line No. 6.
Completed length ... 22.2 miles
Unfinished length ... 4.5 miles
Total ... 26.7 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 6.6 miles

Trunk Line No. 7.
Completed length ... 29.65 miles
Unfinished length ... 11.5 miles
Total ... 41.15 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 10.9 miles

Trunk Line No. 8.
Completed length ... 34.4 miles
Unfinished length ... 7.4 miles
Total ... 41.8 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 1.1 miles

Trunk Line No. 9.
Completed length ... 22.9 miles
Unfinished length ... 54.8 miles
Total ... 77.7 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 3.0 miles

Trunk Line No. 10.
Completed length ... 31.2 miles
Unfinished length ... 26.0 miles
Total ... 57.2 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 6.0 miles

Trunk Line No. 11.
Completed length ... 2.5 miles
Unfinished length ... 49.0 miles
Total ... 51.5 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 3.0 miles

Trunk Line No. 12.
Completed length ... 41.5 miles
Unfinished length ... 55.7 miles
Total ... 97.2 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 2.3 miles

Trunk Line No. 13.
Completed length ... 21.5 miles
Unfinished length ... 72.4 miles
Total ... 93.9 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 6.5 miles

Trunk Line No. 14.
Completed length ... 54.1 miles
Unfinished length ... 67.2 miles
Total ... 121.3 miles
Surveys in office on unfinished length ... 6.75 miles

Gravel Roads.
Gravel Roads.—In the early days of the movement selection was made of gravel as the material with which to construct some of the sections improved on our main trunk lines. This has been found not to stand up under the traffic it is called upon to sustain, and it is the purpose of the department to give these gravel sections a treatment of tar rock splinters, so as to put on a good substantial wearing surface and have a uniform construction of macadam through these particular trunk lines.

The major portion of the mileage of these trunk lines has been of macadam construction, and so as to furnish a continuous system of macadam construction it is the intention of the department to cover all of these gravel sections next season with a tar rock splinter treatment. This system was begun last year and the result has been satisfactory. The low price at which the work was done in the original construction of gravel and the result attained from the treatment suggested resulted in a splendid road at a very reasonable cost.

JONES PUT UP A SUBSTITUTE.

And Incidentally Got Reputation as After-Dinner Speaker.

"If there is one thing I hate," remarked Mr. Jones, "it is after-dinner speeches. Well, once I found myself at a big banquet, where I knew very few of those present. To my amazement and horror, toward the end of the festivities, the toastmaster fixed his eyes upon me.

"We have with us to-night," I heard the old, hated formula toll out unctuously from his lips—and then my own name—"Mr. Jones, the well-known, etc.

The toastmaster concluded, but I made no move to get on my feet. I felt paralyzed; my tongue was seeking to climb through the roof of my mouth.

"And then the guests, from all sides, began yelling: 'Yes, Jones, Jones!' which is Jones?—where is Jones?"

"A brilliant idea came to me. Sitting close beside me was a little man who dearly loved speechifying. Like a flash I jumped to my feet. 'Jones? Why, here's Jones!' I cried, and clapped the little Demosthenes on the shoulder. Then I yanked him to his feet, murmuring in an ominous sotto voce: 'Don't give me away; speak now!'

"He spoke. And, in the guise of myself, he made a most successful little oration. There was loud applause and much shouting of 'What's the matter with Jones? He's all right!'

"As for me, I sipped wine and gradually recovered from the nervous shock occasioned by my narrow escape from being eloquent."

Poetical Epitaph.

The epitaph collector displayed enthusiastically the photograph of a severe and stately marble tomb. "A new epitaph," he said, "and one of the best in my collection. It is the epitaph of a body of Indians slain in battle near Cooperstown. It was composed by a clergyman, W. W. Lord, and I consider it most poetical."

The epitaph upon the tomb was as follows:

"White Man, Greeting! We, near whose bones you stand, were Indians. 'The wide land which is now yours was ours. 'Friendly hands have given back to us enough for a tomb.'"

Legal Amenities.

Several decades ago there lived in Charleston, W. Va., a judge noted for his boorish manners. A very finical lawyer whom he especially disliked was once trying a case before him, and all the while the barrister spoke the judge sat with his feet elevated on the railing in front of him hiding his face.

Exasperated by this the lawyer queried: "May I ask which end of your honor I am to address?"

"Whichever you choose," drawled the judge.

"Well," was the retort, "I suppose there is as much law in one end as the other."

Career for Castro.

Why doesn't Cipriano Castro brace up and make a career in vaudeville?—Detroit Free Press.

About Happiness.

There is no more beneficial tonic than good, hearty laughter. It inflates the lungs and has a magic effect upon the system. Giggling is not laughing, and it is a habit that brings wrinkles and soon spoils even a pretty face. Why not laugh? It improves the appearance and makes one popular. There is nothing to be glum over, and, if there is, being glum will not help it. Be happy and bright and everyone will wish to help you. The girl who wants to be beautiful must sleep with fresh air, plenty of it, in her room. She must go out and revel in the sunshine. She must find plenty of laughter in her daily life. That is the only true way to live and the only way capable of bringing beauty.

"We must not think of war with Japan," says Hobson. If anybody is thinking of war with Japan will he please stop it?—Detroit Free Press.

Of course

you are going to invite your friends to Norwich for the 25th Anniversary, and while they are here you are going to try to give them a good time — WHY NOT?

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(Obverse.)

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